

Manneken Pis (literally little man pee in Dutch, also known in French as le Petit Julien), is a famous Brussels landmark. It is a small bronze fountain sculpture depicting a naked little boy urinating into the fountain's basin. It was designed by Jerome Duquesnoy and put in place in 1618 or 1619. It bears a similar cultural significance as Copenhagen's Little Mermaid. There are several legends behind this statue, but the most famous is the one about Duke Godfrey III of Leuven. In 1142, the troops of this two-year-old lord were battling against the troops of the Berthouts, the lords of Grimbergen, in Ransbeke (now Neder-over-Heembeek). The troops put the infant lord in a basket and hung the basket in a tree to encourage them. From there, the boy urinated on the troops of the Berthouts, who eventually lost the battle. The statue is dressed in costume several times each week, according to a published schedule which is posted on the railings around the fountain. His wardrobe consists of several hundred different costumes, many of which may be viewed in a permanent exhibition inside the City Museum, located in the Grand Place, immediately opposite the Town Hall. The costumes are managed by the non-profit association The Friends of Manneken-Pis, who review hundreds of designs submitted each year, and select a small number to be produced and used.